

RED PLOT AGAINST GERMANY

Communist hate-fiction, reported as objective fact, stirred ugly memories as the West prepared for the Summit

by Richard Roche

IN RECENT MONTHS one European nation, above all others, has been the object of almost continuous publicity on the political plane — most of it defamatory or, at the least, highly uncomplimentary.

Germany, the nation in question, in the recent past deserved the censure of the world. The Germans themselves will be the first to admit that. They are not so ready to admit, however, that the West German Federal Republic should be the rightful target of such propaganda as has been levelled against it of late.

Between the aggressive militarism of the Hitler era and the democratic, peace-loving regime of Dr. Adenauer there is absolutely no comparison. "The Germany of today is not the Germany of yesterday," says David Ben-Gurion, Premier of Israel. His view is worthy of attention.

That there are grounds for the German's annoyance is understandable. One recalls the torrent of anti-German criticism that met the appearance of anti-Semitic slogans in Cologne, the charges of wartime atrocities made against a Bonn Minister, and news of German-Spanish talks on supply bases.

On each occasion the virulence of anti-German press reports was noteworthy. The worst offenders were British and communist papers.

The frequency with which "incidents" followed each other also was noteworthy and pointed to the possibility that not all of them were fortuitous. Evidence that the whole series was part of a communist plot to defame the German Republic has been produced by Bonn Parliamentarians. They seek to show that the inspiration, if not elements, of the campaign emanated from Moscow.

IN THEIR MONTHLY bulletin, *German News*, of February last, the parliamentarians, members of the *Bundestag* and of the *landtags*, stated:

... Communist efforts to defame the German Federal Republic have increased considerably. . . . There are more people in the United States of America, in Britain, France, Belgium, Norway, Poland, Czechoslovakia, India and many other countries of the world falling for communist inspired propaganda than children believing in fairy tales. . . . From year to year and from month to month this propaganda varies . . . the final aim of World Communism remains the same.

The report lists the communists' steps in their "war" on Germany:

At one time the leaders of World Communism apparently believed that the German people could be persuaded to betray their allies, to turn away from the West and to join forces with the Soviets. This period was generally referred to as "efforts to broaden the basis of National Bolshevism." Nationalism was to be aroused in Western Germany, for it would have invariably gone hand in hand with anti-Ameri-

can outbursts. . . . Since this method failed, communists went about trying to isolate Western Germany from the Western allies by defaming the German Federal Republic as being a strong-hold of revived Nazism.

The report states that the following were singled out for particular attention by the communists: the Bonn Government and administration; the West German Armed Forces; the German expellees; West German judges, and all persons opposing communism.

An article in the Czech Communist newspaper, *Jihoceska Pravda*, early in 1959, bears out these allegations:

In Germany the military-police regime has killed the worker's right of freedom. . . . The Nazi Generals have introduced universal compulsory military service. . . . And who makes that regime that steals, hoodwinks and incites revenge? All this is done by a mere 150 multi-millionaires and 800 Hitler war judges on whose hands the blood has not yet dried.

All through 1959, similar attacks on West German institutions and personalities continued. Rarely, however, did the communists find the ear of

world public opinion. This changed after the press throughout the world started reporting the anti-Semitic incidents in Germany in December. "Communist propaganda," states the *German News* report, "switched over to 'full speed ahead.' "

Pravda, Radio Prague and communist papers referred to the "fascist campaign" in the West. "Fascist provocations in Western Germany are encouraged in their activity by the fact that there are former Nazis occupying posts in the Adenauer government," said Radio Prague on January 2. "The culprits of the anti-Semitic acts are residing in Bonn," said the communist *Deutschlandsender*, January 4.

INVESTIGATIONS carried out by the Bonn Government subsequently discovered that the vital beginnings of the Swastika-scrawling and the slogan-painting campaign were fomented by men with connections in communist East Germany. Two-thirds of the incidents was the work of rowdies and drunks.

A report in *Newsweek* at the time confirmed the growing suspicion that Moscow had a hand in the swastika scrawlings. It said:

This comes from a ranking

Soviet official now visiting here: Red party leaders from Western Europe, meeting in Rome last December with satellite colleagues, hatched the outbreak of Swastika-smearing and anti-Semitic incidents in West Germany.

Yet, before confirmation could be gleaned or even before Bonn could launch its investigation, newspapers in the United States, Britain and France scrambled to attack the revival of Nazism in West Germany, charging that international fascism was staging a come-back and warning that the Federal Republic must be viewed with suspicion. One prefers to believe that these organs of public propaganda did not realize they were aiding the communists in their campaign to defame Germany.

Communist propaganda, up to this, had undisguisedly used the anti-Semitic incidents to prove that atomic weapons in the hands of West Germany were a danger to world peace, that West Germany was ruled by Nazis, revengists and militarists and that Bonn justice was helping former Nazis. A perusal of British, French and American papers at the time of the Swastika-scrawlings reveals a sinister sameness in the pattern of abuse. In their eagerness to

find sensation and readiness to discover in Germany a suitable whipping-boy these papers, unwittingly it is hoped, played almost as vital a part in the campaign against Germany as did the press and radio of the communists, themselves.

IN A SPECIAL report on communist propaganda directed against German expellees, their leaders and organizations, Bonn parliamentarians in early 1959 wrote in *German News*:

Ever since communism became an effective political force, its leaders made it clear that the end always justified the means. Today the free nations of Western Europe are faced with a huge offensive of Soviet psychological warfare. It has become obvious that the only valid criterion for the judgment of the propaganda is not its degree of objective truth, but its efficiency.

Just how effective communist propaganda has been can be seen upon reflecting that a few anti-Semitic slogans in Cologne started a chain-reaction of similar scrawlings in other parts of the world. The communist-inspired slogans found ready ears in the Western world. As *German News* put it:

Reaction, namely in Britain, shows that this propaganda is about to reap its fruits. There, a large section of the press and several members of parliament are warning of the "dangers of German re-armament," reporting about the "revival of Nazism in West Germany" and demanding recognition for the so-called German Democratic Republic. Has communism really won a decisive round?

Yet even while the score in round one remained to be totted up, a second phase in the campaign to defame West Germany was already opening. Known targets of communist propaganda, under heavy fire from Moscow, East Berlin, Prague and Warsaw, are the Bonn administration and individual members of the government.

The communist-run Committee for German Unity in East Berlin published two reports, *Who Rules Bonn?* and *We accuse*. The former sought to prove that Bonn was ruled by a clique of former Nazis, multimillionaires and "Hitler war judges." The latter lists, among 800 war criminals, two Ministers in Bonn, 181 state attorneys and 22 land judges.

About the same time the Czech Communist paper, *Jiho-*

ceska Pravda, concentrated its attack on German officers, judges and state attorneys and two Bonn Ministers.

These broad attacks have crystallized into specific assaults on Professor Theodor Oberlaender, Minister for Refugees at Bonn; Herr Globke, Secretary of State in Adenauer's Chancellory; Dr. Schroeder, Minister of the Interior in West Germany; and Herr Reinefarth, a Lord Mayor in Land Schleswig Holstein.

PAPERS in the U.S., Britain and France have been unduly swift to pick up these attacks and give them publicity. A few demanded the resignation of Prof. Oberlaender, whose retort—that in doing so he would be doing a great favor to the communists—places these demands in their proper perspective. The attacks on Prof. Oberlaender were renewed and on May 4, after the ruling Christian Democrats had voted a special Bundestag investigative Committee to examine Oberlaender's Nazi past Chancellor Adenauer accepted his resignation.

A third incident was to play into communist hands almost as advantageously. This was the controversy about German

bases in Spain. The truth of the matter was lost in a welter of propaganda. Germany made preliminary soundings about the possibility of depots in Spain — as well as in other countries. But Germany did so with the approval of America, Britain and France.

Sebastian Haffner, the *Observer's* Correspondent in Berlin wrote:

What has happened now, in the German view, is that some highly selective part results of inter-allied military deliberations have suddenly been leaked in a sensational manner, thereby incidentally divulging important military secrets; and that they have subsequently been embellished with fantastic and vague additions and insinuations in the Press—particularly in Britain. . . . All this has undoubtedly made a deep impression in Germany. The Germans think they know the source of the leak, and they have their own ideas about the intentions behind it.

Competent authorities are agreed that the leakage and the manner in which it has been treated in the press have done considerable damage to Western relations in general and to Anglo-German relations in particular.

Not only that, but it gave the communists another excuse to belabor the already much-maligned German Republic. Moscow was quick to see in this German move another "threat to world peace." Anything that tends to accentuate differences in the Western camp or aggravate existing disagreements, no matter how trivial, is grist to the communist mill. They did not overlook the talks between Germany and Spain. Result: another round to the communists. The question remains: who threw the fight away, and why?

UNLIKE the cases of the anti-Semitic incidents and the "Nazis in Bonn" scare, this was one development that could hardly be laid at the feet of the communists. Yet, the fact that

they were the only ones to gain from it suggests that, in some devious way, they or their tools in the West were involved.

There is hardly any need to explain why this further incident constituted another communist victory. Before the Summit meeting Khrushchev and his henchmen used the German card at every opportunity to wring concessions from the West. Failing, Khrushchev resolutely destroyed the Summit with his U-2 spy plane histrionics. This bluff served mostly to solidify the NATO Western powers against him. But the subject of "German fascism, militarism, revengism and the danger of a surprise attack with nuclear weapons by the Hitler generals" will remain part and parcel of all communist speech-making.

ANNIVERSARY of a Horrible Event

Fifteen years ago during the severe winter of 1945 one of the most tragic mass migrations in world history took place. Two million East Germans lost their lives attempting to flee from the oncoming Red Army. The weather was icy, the temperature was below zero. Most of the old people and infants froze to death on the way-side while other hundreds and thousands were mowed down by Russian planes, bombs and tanks. Those who did not flee were the victims of killing orgies and rape. Other hundreds and thousands were deported as 'living death' slaves to the Soviet Union never to be heard from again. Thousands upon thousands were burned alive or drowned in the Elbe River in a desperate attempt to escape the fire bombs. The financial loss to these people surpassed sixty billion dollars. Of the 53 million people who now live in West Germany, 12 million are refugees from Soviet terror.